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VADE MECUM, VOLVENTIBUS ANNIS

THE MAYANS
SAN ANTONIO,
TEXAS

Degree 8 - 9

Number 185

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MORE STATELY MANSIONS
Mayan Revelation Number 185

CONSTRUCTION

On the Way

Work

The Nature of Work

Values

Abilities and Skills

The Time Element

The House is You

Affirmation

Beloved Centurion:

An Indian philosopher, being asked what were the two most beautiful things in the Universe, answered, "The starry heavens above our head and the beauty of character which men build into their lives."

In our current study, MORE STATELY MANSIONS, we have taken up first FOUNDATIONS and then SCAFFOLDING, and now we come to CONSTRUCTION. Many men build their lives as cathedrals are built, the part nearest the ground is finished, but that part which goes seemingly toward heaven, the turrets and spires, are never completed.

As we take up the study of CONSTRUCTION, as we build our character and a new life, we must take every precaution that our determination does not weaken, thereby causing us to build only the FOUNDATION and SCAFFOLDING. We must not lose hope.

Right at this point I would suggest you look at the picture of the cathedral in Milan, which is used as an illustration in this series of lessons. It is hard to believe that at one time this great and magnificent edifice was only a foundation; then came the scaffolding, then the wonderful construction that you look at today. Had you seen just the foundation you probably would have found it difficult to imagine it as it stands today for all to behold its beauty and exclaim at the miracle of architecture.

We can compare the building of our lives to this monument. Our lives and our characters can be built in exactly the same way. The greatest danger is in losing heart, thinking within ourselves that the task is too difficult. There would be no Milan cathedral today if the architect had become discouraged and felt that the project was too great. He started out to build something great and never stopped until he had accomplished his purpose.

There is a thought I would like to bring you which I feel could be tremendously powerful in your endeavors to build More Stately Mansions. There are many people who feel that there is something in their lives of which they are not proud. Maybe they feel that they have sinned and it is impossible to erase that sin. Now here is something to remember - when you ask God for forgiveness for a sin, He forgives you always; and when you have been cleansed of that sin or wrong, you are a new person, you are starting life anew. From the standpoint of that particular sin or sins for which you have asked God to forgive you, they are gone forever just as though they had never existed and you are beginning again with a clean slate. Of course, one may sin again, after they have been forgiven, and then the same procedure will need to be followed all over again - but remember, God always forgives you.

I bring this thought to your attention right here because I feel there are people who have had certain situations in their lives of which they are not proud, and they feel no matter what they do they cannot wipe out this act or these acts. This feeling tends to discourage them in trying to build a new life.

Perhaps you have had no such situation in your life so you are not concerned with this. Some months ago, however, I had an experience which I pass on to you. A lady in her 80's had heard me make this explanation of forgiveness, and it gave her a new lease on life. She had been worrying about something that had happened years

ago in her life, never quite realizing that when we ask our Father to forgive us, He does so and that sin is gone forever. It was indeed a great relief to her to come to that realization.

Yes, we can always start anew. We can start at any time to build a new life. That is the purpose of this series of lessons. Make up your mind not to let anything interfere with your desire to build MORE STATE-LY MANSIONS.

As we say together the following prayer, let us think carefully on the words of our petition and then proceed with the lesson:

PRAYER

Heavenly Father, help me so to order my days that each will be an addition toward the completion of a constructive and purposeful life. Amen.

*** PART ONE ***

* * * * * The scaffolding built, and the first steps in construction
* * * * * taken, you are on the way. That is often the hardest part of
* ON THE WAY * a task. The initial enthusiasm, if any, is in your favor;
* * * * * but it usually takes a little of the first motions to get
* * * * * warmed up and interested. It is likely to be easier after
that. Even so, one then made a start, and no more. Plan the
work ahead, but concentrate on the work in hand. Be ready for tomorrow, but remember that today's work is what matters now.

If when Moses died on Mount Nebo his soul had started to wing its flight to the Planet Neptune at the rate of a mile a minute, it would still be on the way. Your more stately mansion will not take so long as that to build, but it will take time. It is nothing to expect to see finished next week. You cannot hurry the process, but you can conserve the time by making each day count and allowing no slowdowns, stoppage, or slippings back. That is better than hurry anyway, for haste often slows a task instead of speeding it, while slower-moving carefulness often wins the race.

On a certain public building is carved the sentence, "The Past is Prologue". On a memorial gateway is inscribed, "The Ages Have Been Getting Ready for Us". The world is always on the way toward "That one far-off, divine event toward which the whole creation moves." We are always on the way toward the completion of one more stately mansion and the beginning of another. The empty shell the nautilus leaves on the sand always shows that its one-time occupant was on the way to a larger life. The onward struggle is never done. Life is always on the way.

When you start to build a more spacious, adequate, satisfying, effective life you have undertaken something creditable and good, but you have only started on the realization of your infinite possibilities. There are some compensations, however, even for standing at the beginning of a task. The opportunity is still complete. Your record is still clean. You haven't spoiled anything yet. The situation is full of promise, and it is real. There is nothing to do over or wish you had done it otherwise. It is still possible to do your best. All that is in your favor at the beginning.

You can and should congratulate yourself that you have undertaken something that is eminently worthwhile, that will be of boundless and growing satisfaction to you, and that will make your life mean more to you, to others, and to the future. That should make you very happy and keep you very busy.

In other words, an interesting road is open to you, and a great adventure lies ahead. You have been inspired to make a daring plan, Faith has told you you can transfer it from the drawing board to actuality, you have accepted the challenge and you are on your way. Day by day you are to see the unfolding details of a more stately mansion. How good the future should look from where you stand!

*** PART TWO ***

* * * * * "All this just means work, more work, humdrum work", you may say. No,
* * * that is not all it means. In the first place, challenging, worth-
* WORK * while work that improves your situation and your outlook immeasurably
* * * should not be humdrum. What is drab about making tomorrow better
* * * * * than today? This work means to see progress in your own well-being
from day to day. It means a dream coming true right before your
eyes. It means a sense of achievement, and a day of fulfillment coming nearer all
the time.

Of course it does mean work. There is no denying that. There is not a structure on earth it has not taken work to build; and the finer the structure the more work and care its building has taken. Work is an inescapable fact in all realization. Study any spot or thing in the universe and you will find patient, constant work going on there. That seems to be the divine plan whether one be a chambered nautilus or a human.

Who would want it otherwise? Who can name a reason why it should be otherwise? Would you want simply to make a wish and have a genie appear and draw it out of a magic vase for you? What kind of a person would that soon make you to be? Man was born to be strong, self-reliant, and capable. How long would he remain so without work to do? Would you want to live with the feeling that you deserve no credit for what you have?

What is so bad about work anyway? It is seldom thought of as a pastime, but it is the best possible way to spend most of one's time. No one of any age is fortunate to be without something to do. Speaking of drabness, what could be more drab and uninteresting than never seeing a pattern grow under one's hands or seeing anything change for the better by one's efforts? The normal body is full of energy and it needs an outlet that is constructive. Work not only makes use of strength and skill, but it increases them.

When one loses or cannot generate interest in his work something is wrong. It is not the right work, or he has not the right attitude toward it, or he is not doing it well. Perhaps he has not caught the idea of productive and responsible living. Whatever it is, he needs to discover it and either change it or his program. It is not normal not to want to produce. Of course, if the cause is overwork the remedy for the time being, and only for the time being, is rest.

Most of us believe that Godlikeness is the aim and goal of right living. If you want to be Godlike, you will have to work. Think what it means to build a universe, people it, maintain it, and age on age look after the needs and problems of so large a family, and yet be always planning and building something better. This job you are undertaking means work, and you will be working on it a long time. That will bring you to where you see the need and opportunity for a better one. But it will give you a lifetime of satisfaction and benefit. How better could you spend your time?

*** PART THREE ***

* * * * * We say that the new life must be built by work like
 * * * * * any other structure, but we must point out that the
 * THE NATURE OF WORK * nature of this work is different from that required
 * * * * * in building any other kind of structure. It is not
 * * * * * the kind of work done with hammer and saw. It is the
work of study, devotion, and practice in right and
kindly living. It is the work of anything that will build quality, sincerity, and
durability into your life.

A part of the prelude to it is how and why you do whatever is your daily occupation. One can carry on his work for a livelihood in such a way as to deteriorate his house of life and go backward instead of forward in its construction. On the other hand, he can do it in such a way as to add stature, strength and beauty to his spiritual self. Is it dedicated work? Did you choose it to give as well as to take? Do you carry it on honestly? Is it a work that does no harm? Is it a necessary work? These are some of the tests. Answer the questions in your own heart.

You can tell from time to time how you are getting on by self-examination. What do you see in the mirror on the wall of your room? What do you see in the mirror that hangs in your consciousness? What do you see when you impartially watch your thoughts and emotions? What do you see when you observe the effect of your life on other people and on the community? How helpful is your presence in the world, beginning at home? What kind of influence do you send out, and how much? The more disturbing the test is the more good it is doing. If you are already perfect, why try to make any improvements at all? Just be at peace!

Every time the door of your mind opens some change is made in you. Everything you allow to enter there helps to determine what you will henceforth feel, do, think, and say. These in turn will contribute to what people think you are, and what you know you are. One might say figuratively that every time a thought passes through one's mind he lays a brick on the wall of his more - or less - stately mansion. In this endeavor one may work without being conscious of it.

So you see you are always building, wherever you go, whatever you do. Day

and night you are adding much or little, but something, to the wall of your new mansion, or you are marring and weakening a little of what was already there, or you are tearing a little of it out. We can see and feel ourselves doing these things if we try, and we certainly can see and feel the result of them when they are done. Anyone who stops to think knows whether he is a builder or bungler.

At the beginning of serious effort this watching and governing yourself so carefully may seem like work, and it is; but it will grow easier as you go on, until in time it will become a delight like that of the farmer as he watches his crop mature. The last lap of a race takes as much effort as the first, but there is more pleasure in doing it.

Of course all this will give you plenty to plan and do, but what an inviting task to find each part and fit it into its appointed place in what one day will be a finished structure reflecting credit on its builder and equipping you for a better quality of living. It is a grand puzzle about which you can always be sure of two things - it is important, and it is possible.

*** PART FOUR ***

* * * * *
* * * * *
* VALUES *
* * * * *
One of the vital things you will be doing in this all-important undertaking will be to find the best available values and build them into it. But you do not want worthless nor even inferior ones, so you have a responsibility of choice. They must be tested for quality and worth. How? By actual trial, of course. How else can you tell whether a thing will work than to observe what its effect has always been when someone used it?

For this St. Paul has given us a famous formula - "Prove all things. Hold fast to that which is good". The values you use will come from your own mines, and you want them to prove out well. You will want to know how true, needful, and enduring they are.

How will you judge? Not by their glitter or fashion, but by the best judgment and experience of yourself and humankind. Never dream that anything that has been a failure every time it has been tried will prove a success now.

Doubtless there will even be people who will tell you this is not necessarily true, that things change and their effects change with them. No, customs and outward appearances change; but the constitution of life and nature never changes in any way. The effects of truth and error are as changeless as truth and error themselves. What is degrading, weakening, or deceptive is always so, and what is helpful, uplifting, and constructive is equally constant. The foolish yearn for change, the wise for permanence.

Build your inner life of dependable beliefs, worthy ideals, true understanding, helpful habits, noble aspirations, and the intake and outflow of helpful influences. See that everything you build into it is true, worthy, beneficent, and permanent. No structure is better than the materials of which it is built, and these and such as these are your materials. Seek them, test them, and use them. They will not fail you. This I promise you.

You need no hammer or trowel to build materials like these into the structure of your life. The construction processes for them are different. Do them, speak of them, or even think about them, and they are a part of your result. Even though you may never have heard of them before they are now a part of your self, and every day from now on will be affected by their presence. You can always analyze yourself and remember exactly where you took on this tendency, that habit, or the other preference. Thus you can know how we acquire them.

Thus too, your heart will know how you are getting on at any time. The inner eye will measure your walls and judge the quality of your work. Be grateful when it says, "Well done, thou faithful servant", and let no day come when it can say you are weighed in the balances and found wanting. Your succession of more stately mansions will be your real biography, the one the ages will treasure as now unborn generations come and go.

*** PART FIVE ***

* * * * *
 * ABILITIES AND SKILLS *
 * * * * *

Remember that in this discussion we are thinking of more than material gains. We bear in mind that we owe all good things to Providence, and that material blessings, necessary as they are, come as the results of spiritual ones rather than as the cause of them. Building your new life is not merely getting along well in the world. That is important, of course, but everyone tries to do that, whatever kind of person he may be. That is only one's subsistence while he is busy building a more stately mansion of life.

One kind of material, or equipment, one must use, however, consists of the abilities and skills he has over and above those he uses in making a living. Some of them are invisible, but one knows they exist because he uses them every day. One is the habit of using his means of livelihood honorably and rightly, and of using his loveliness itself in the sharing spirit. He will find this an effective safeguard against the wrong attitudes that make for so much confusion and loss.

Other skills and habits that contribute to success in the building of our more stately mansions are the custom of speaking the truth in kindness, acting with brotherly helpfulness, scattering happiness wherever possible, building and fostering friendship, keeping life and its processes constructive, and receiving and using in the right spirit our resources both human and divine. All these things breathe the music of the song of the builder. All of them strengthen the hand that rears the walls of a better tomorrow.

(Please read the above paragraph again).

Another important building skill is that of arriving at right conclusions and assuming just attitudes. A reckless tongue and a hasty judgment are instruments of the destruction of a great deal of success and happiness. The older you grow, the more satisfaction a well-ruled spirit will give you and the oftener you will escape the scourging consequences of regretful memories you cannot change. More and more you will realize that "he that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city."

Consider the value of the habit of keeping your thoughts and attitudes appreciative rather than depreciative. Try to have, cultivate, and be controlled by the habit of seeing the best and not the worst in people, the hopeful and not the despairing side of conditions, the promise and not the threat in events and experiences, the gladness and not the gloom in your own life. Do not let it be superficial. Grind it deep in your spirit.

Another skill to remember is that of making the most of time and opportunity. One of the saddest things in life is the amount of privilege and happiness people miss by not gathering flowers while they may; failing to do, say, or profit by opportunities as they pass and privileges while they hang like ripened fruit before us.

Finally, let us remember the importance of skill in concentrating all possible force on each important objective at the right time. The right time is the ripe time while the objective is vital, while the iron is hot. Have a reflector for your light so you can concentrate it all at the needful point yet let none of it escape into the darkness.

*** PART SIX ***

* * * * * It seems well before we close this lesson to devote a
* * * * * little attention to the time element in this construction
* THE TIME ELEMENT * enterprise. The past generations used to say, "Make
* * * * * haste slowly." What they meant was that there is a mean
* * * * * between hurry and slowness along which it is well to
operate. There we do not waste time by inaction, yet
we do not risk the quality of our work by not taking enough time to do each thing
rightly.

If you watch a construction job awhile you will see this very clearly. It may take a little longer to get just the right material than to get something less desirable. Some materials, like concrete, must be given time to set; and some, like wood, have to be given time to season. There are countless ways in which a piece of work can be lowered in quality by too much haste. A good workman takes plenty of time for study, observation, and discussion. This is even more true in the building of our more stately mansions.

It is the more so because while we put a material building together of material pieces, the building of our more stately mansions is a kind of growing process. It has been said that it doesn't take long to grow a squash, but if you want to grow a mighty tree it may take a hundred years. The chambered nautilus grows its successive houses. Every lovely, iridescent bit of it comes about through the life processes of the tenant itself, and it could never deliver the finished product ahead of time.

Two of the chief elements going into our more stately mansions are knowledge and understanding, and of these there is no possibility of mass production or of speeded up assemblage. The mind has great storage space, but it can be filled only so fast. The ancient formula is "Line upon line, precept upon precept; here a little, there a little."

When the young teacher later to be known as General Stonewall Jackson took his bride to Virginia Military Institute, where he was to teach, they had at first to occupy a very small house. There was no place for the young professor to have a study, so in the afternoon each day he turned a chair to a back wall, announced that he would be in his study for awhile, then went diligently and silently to his books, papers, and thoughts. He was building up the power to help make history. He also had his seasons of meditation and prayer, building up the strength and courage that make him remembered as a great and good man. It took time, and he gave it time. Even God waits for his flowers to grow and blossom.

Rush orders for quality living are not deliverable. Each day brings it a little nearer, but there are so many things, and no less, to be done before it is complete. We can always use whatever part of it is done, but there can be no full occupancy till the last detail is finished. You cannot cheat yourself, nor would you wish to if you could.

*** PART SEVEN ***

* * * * *	What you build does more than rise before you as a struc-
* * * * *	ture, and how you build it does more than succeed or fail
* THE HOUSE IS YOU *	in attracting admiring attention to its quality and skill.
* * * * *	More than a program of action, more than something you
* * * * *	do and have, it stands against your personal firmament,
	a living part of what you are. Each succeeding home of
	the chambered nautilus is actually a part of its life till it is succeeded by another.
	Your more stately mansion is not merely something you have made, nor even merely
	something you have done; it is something you have lived and something you now are.

The difference between a child and a man is that a man has built more of his life material into his house of being. What he has been doing has been becoming a part of his being for a long time. You can tell about how long, about how steadily, and about its nature and quality, from what the person is. An expert in fabrics can look closely at a piece of cloth and tell you what materials are in it and in what proportions. The same thing can be done with character and personality.

A change has taken place in the person you see after not having seen for a long time. It is a change not merely of appearance but also of nature and personality. It is not merely a matter of time either. It is wrought more of the kind of material of which he has been building his mind and enriching his spirit since you saw him last. The inner self dines daily at its own table. Whether its diet is as good, well-selected, and well-prepared, as that served the physical self, is a matter for each of us to determine; but the results will tell.

What anyone has been making through the years, what he has been doing, the kind of people he has associated with, the kind of books he has read, the kind of desires that have lured him, all show any day what he is. He has built them into a habitation as the chambered nautilus does. The house of the chambered nautilus is always beautiful. The same cannot always be said of the spiritual habitations some people build. May it be better with yours.

All this means that we can inspect the new house of life we are building at

any time. We should know it, for we should know ourselves. There is good reason for this right of inspection we have. It enables us to know how well we are doing, and that enables us to change our methods if we see we are not doing well enough. Our more stately mansions are not stationary. They go where we go, so we do not have to move out of our places to look them over.

Does your house of life have a friendly door and a well-worn threshold? Does it let in plenty of light and fresh air? Is it warmed and brightened with love? Does it radiate good will? Are those who come and go better and happier for having done so? Does it send out influences that illuminate, strengthen, and lift? Is it always clean, well-swept, and in order?

The building goes on very quietly, but very steadily; and you may depend on it that it, like any building, is a composite of what you have wrought into it up to now. The builder sees change every day, and the change is the content of the way he himself has lived. Do you see why, like the chambered nautilus, we need always to be creating more stately mansions? The mansions are ourselves.

AFFIRMATION

Mine is a growing life, and it requires an expanding habitation. To build that habitation is my task, and I am about it day by day.

Keep in mind that if the mind is not used, it deteriorates. It is thus not only with our minds, but also physically and spiritually. The next lesson will come to you under the heading of WORKMANSHIP - a very important subject for you.

May God Bless You in your efforts to
build a more stately mansion.

YOUR INSTRUCTOR.

